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1983

## ION OF IRAN

Uriel Atkin, in an article in the *New York* on March 25, 1982, argued that the Soviet Union should devise an effective strategy to enhance its position in Iran. The Iranian Communist Party, the party that had little success in encouraging a more radical attitude or strengthening its own position. It was unable to come up with a program that was

more appealing to the workers and peasants than anything offered by the rival parties. Its only broadly popular line was its anti-Americanism, which was common to all parties. Although much of Iran's trade goes through the Soviet Union, this cannot be regarded, according to Atkin, as evidence of a pro-Soviet tilt on the part of Iran, as the United States had been blockading Iranian shipping in the Persian Gulf. Moreover, Iran has sought agreements with West Germany and a number of Middle Eastern and African countries. Atkin pointed out that the Shah, in any case, far exceeded Khomeini in the number of commercial and technical agreements concluded with the Soviet Union.

### Soviet Gains

In the Spring of this year, in an article entitled, "Gains for Soviet Policy in the Middle East,"<sup>2</sup> Shahram Chubin admitted that it would be difficult to portray Soviet policy toward Iran as successful, yet he was more im-

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relations between the two countries. Although a trade protocol had been signed on June 20, 1980, and a transit agreement concluded in September 1980, Rubinstein pointed out that once the hostage crisis was over, the transit agreement lost its *raison d'être* and that the trade contracts had not been fulfilled. Thus, "Trade is down, the number of Soviet technicians has sharply decreased, and few missions are exchanged. The overall level of economic interaction is low. Far from being able to exploit United States-Iranian tensions to expand Soviet-Iranian economic ties and deepen Iran's dependence on the Soviet Union, Moscow has instead angered Tehran with its intransigence and niggardliness on the natural gas issue. There have been no economic agreements and, with one exception (a proposed power station), no new projects of consequence. Such activities as the Soviet Union is engaged in date back to the days of the Shah. The Soviet-Iranian economic relationship remains a victim of the unresolved domestic struggle for control of

<sup>1</sup>International Affairs<sup>2</sup>International Security

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